



Helping People Help Themselves

SPARE CHANGE NEWS

December 17 - December 30, 2010

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PHOTO / REUTERS/SHANNON STARLETON

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Spare Change News
1151 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02138
Phone: 617-497-1595
Fax: 617-868-0767
Spare Change News Worcester
301 Pleasant St.
Worcester, MA 01609
Phone: 508-754-7793
E-mail:
editor@sparechangenews.net
director@sparechangenews.net
Website:
www.sparechangenews.net
www.greaterworcesterhomeless.org

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Samuel Weems

Editorial Assistant

Alison Clark

Chalkey Horenstein

Contributing Writers

Liam Cunningham

Jacques Fleury

Marc D. Goldfinger

Chalkey Horenstein

Aaron James

Dr. Mary M. McLaughlin

Ryk McIntyre

Adam Sennott

James Shearer

Robert Sondak

Becca Traite

Vendor Supervisors

Norman Watne

Gary Gilreath

Charles Stallings

Advertising Representative

Debbie Clarke

Contributing Artist

Kevin Botelho

Gary Gagne

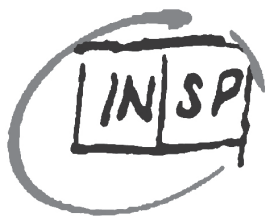
Contributing Photographers

Nersis Jamsakian

REUTERS/Shannon Stapleton



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Vision & Mission

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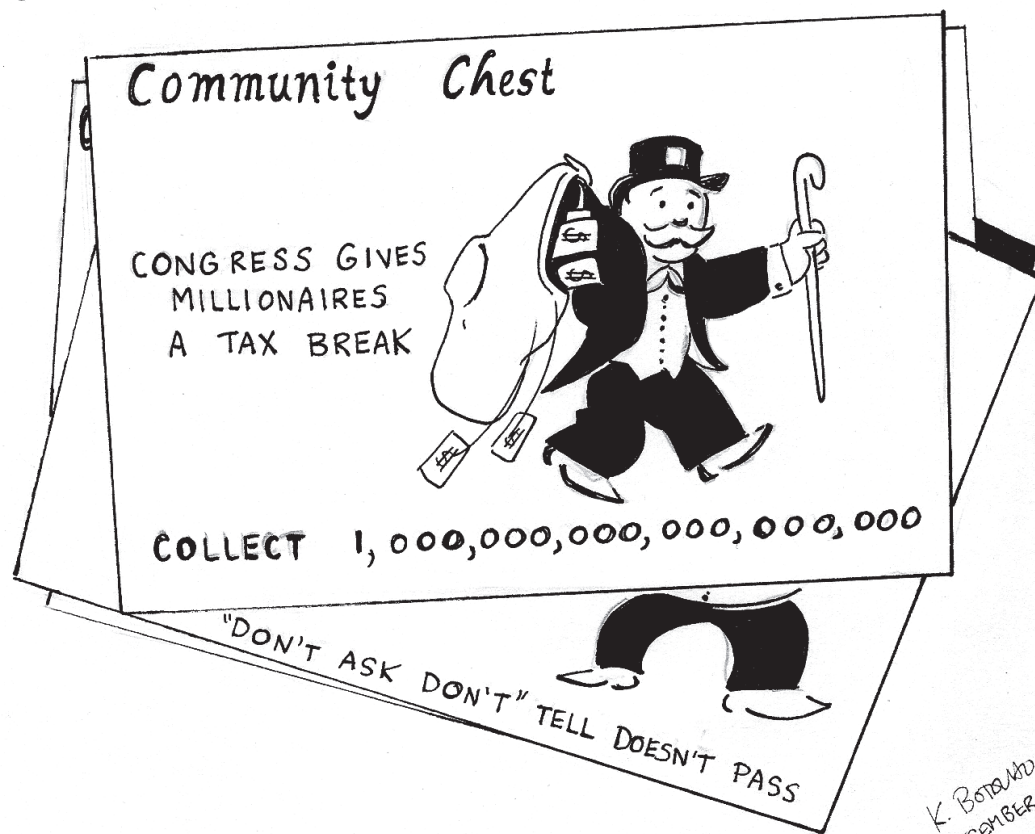
SPARE CHANGE'S GOAL:

"To present, by our own example, that homeless and economically disadvantaged people, with the proper resources, empowerment, opportunity, and encouragement are capable of creating change for ourselves in society."

HEP'S OBJECTIVES:

To empower the economically disadvantaged in Greater Boston through self-employment, skill development and self-expression. To create forums, including those of independent media in order to reshape public perception of poverty and homelessness.

CONGRESSIONAL MONOPOLY CARDS



Worldwide Vendor Spotlight: Gregory Henry Daugherty



Chalkey Horenstein
Spare Change News

Despite being more commonly found in Cambridge's Harvard Square, Spare Change News vendor Gregory Henry Daugherty boasts he was a born and raised Bostonian.

"I'm from Boston. Born and raised in Boston - not

Cambridge, Boston. I went to Boston Trade High School, and did everything in Boston. Here, you've got more people into a lot of other things. You've got colleges, you've got business people, and you've got street people, so this is a good place to be.

"I was on the streets for fifteen years. It was hard. I had to do a lot of things to help myself. I had to put

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Thoughts on Fair Trade

Spare Change News recently contributed to the Global Voices section of the Street News Service Website. The goal was to go one and ask a random person on the street if they bought Fair Trade products, and what effect they thought they had on the consumer market. Spare Change found two people with very interesting opinions on the matter, and here is what they had to say.

Adam Sennott
Spare Change News

Jonathan Clegg, 18
Somerville, Massachusetts
Student, University of Mass., Amherst

SCN: Do you buy Fair Trade products?
Clegg: When I can, unfortunately not all the time, it's not a requirement. At the same time, I stopped drinking coffee a while back which has kind of limited the whole thing about fair trade because that's a huge fair trade thing.

SCN: Do you think it's driven prices up, dropped prices down?
Clegg: I think that if it is more expensive then it's alright by me. I think, ya know, pay the price you deserve to pay. "It's the same reason I try not to by Nike shoes, or shoes that are made in sweatshops in China, because they are cheaper but at the same time they're a lot more....it's awful, it's amoral. So if it drives prices up, I don't mind."



Pam Walcott, 42
Works at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Somerville Massachusetts

SCN: Do you buy fair trade products?
Walcott: Yes I do

SCN: Why do you think it's important to buy them?
Walcott: Because it says that the person who's growing or providing it, wherever it's from, is getting paid a fair wage for it.

SCN: What type of an effect do you think fair trade has had on the consumer market?
Walcott: Like our consumer market? I don't know, because I feel like fair trade products cost more but that would make sense if they're paying a fair wage to the other people. But I am not sure how it affects our market. But I would imagine it affects the people who are getting the fair wage; it affects them much more than us.



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skeletons away and not look back. You know, girlfriend problems, nowhere to live, hunger. In these times, you have to work things out with yourself and humble yourself."

Before working with Spare Change News, Daugherty got his money from passing out coupons in Harvard Square. "I passed out coupons for a year before I started Spare Change. The guy who did the coupon thing died, and his wife tried to take over but wasn't into it as much. I came here [Spare Change] fifteen years ago, liked it, and have been here ever since.

"I didn't find Spare Change. Spare Change found me," said Daugherty. "I knew this guy working for Spare Change back when I was passing out coupons for Square Deals. He asked me to come down to the Spare Change office, and they agreed to pay me after my first 100 papers. I've been doing it since then.

"Spare Change helped me out in so many ways. It made me happy with myself, and showed me I could do things for myself. It gives you a chance to love yourself and wake up in the morning and know you can do things. I

feel that anyone can read this paper and should help Spare Change. It's a great thing."

In addition to being helped by Spare Change, Spare Change benefited from Daugherty; the icon used on each new issue is a silhouette of Daugherty.

"I'm in housing right now. I'm okay now. Spare Change helped me clear my mind once I had an idea where I was going get a dollar from. That was the big thing. I could focus on other things as long as I knew I could feed myself and clothe myself."

Daugherty mentioned that he has many regular buyers, and that he meets all sorts of people working on the streets, even actors.

"They came into Harvard Square and told me they liked how I was doing my thing, and then sat around and talked to me. I can't remember any names, but I met 'em."

"I opened up a sketch with them in the Harvard Yard. It was the first time I'd ever been on stage in my life. It was called "Flashlight" it was about things about Cambridge and people in Cambridge — all about people. It was a ten minute sketch, and I played myself. I opened the sketch."

In addition to "Flashlight,"

Daugherty said he was an extra in the background of Good Will Hunting, which was filmed in the Boston area. "I was happy. I never thought I'd be able to do something like that."

When asked about advice for other street newspaper vendors, Daugherty replied, "I always tell them Spare Change is a paper where you have to be patient. You can't give up if you don't do well on your first time. If you don't have any ambition, you shouldn't work here. They're not going give you the money — You have to earn it."

Daugherty, however, stated that he

started out a natural. He has always been good with people.

"You have good times and bad times. Not everything's the same. You might have a few good months, and you might have to struggle. You can't really budget since you don't know how it's going be. But Spare Change has been a great experience for me. I got a chance to meet a lot of people — actors, actresses even — and I got a lot of chances to do things I wouldn't normally do, and it kept me out of trouble."

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Comments,
Questions,
Story Ideas?

Send a letter to the editor
editor@sparechangenews.net

Serving the Community:

Non-Profit Sells 14,000 Pies for Individuals and Families Living with Chronic Illness.

Robert Sondak
Spare Change News

A Boston-based non-profit organization sold 14,000 pies to raise funds to help feed individuals and families living with chronic illness this Thanksgiving.

Community Servings is a non-profit organization which provides food and nutrition support services to individuals and families living with chronic illnesses. Founded in 1989, they have grown from a small neighborhood-based meals program providing dinner to 30 people struggling with HIV / Aids into a regional program serving lunch, dinner and snacks to 1,400 people yearly across Eastern Massachusetts. They deliver over 300,000 meals to people with chronic illnesses.

The Pie In The Sky fundraising program, which started in 1993, has helped Community Servings to fund its meals and nutrition program for its chronically ill clients. The Pie In The Sky program provides funds for the food, meal preparation, and delivery across Eastern Massachusetts, from Boston up to the New Hampshire border, and all the way down to the Cape. This program sells professionally baked pies prepared by neighboring community restaurants, culinary schools, and universities.



The program started after David Waters, Director of Community Servings, approached friends and associates from within Boston's hospitality industry to ask about the feasibility of developing a professional pie fundraising program over the Thanksgiving holiday.

"Many restaurant chiefs and other staff have lost family and friends to Aids," said Waters. "Many of these hospitality professionals joined our fund-raising program as a way to give to the community and to remember family and friends close to them."

According to Waters, the Pie In The Sky Program started with 30 to 40 professionals in the food service/hospitality industry baking their specialized pies. Today, the program has grown to include 150 professionals in the food service/hospitality industry.

"In our first year 1993, we sold 1,000 pies and raised \$25,000," said Waters.

Waters went on to elaborate that Community Servings also works with local universities.



"We work with the Harvard University Dining Services, Boston College Dining Services, and Northeastern University food service, Chartwells," said Waters.

Waters also pointed out that several restaurants and bakers from Boston and surrounding cities volunteered their services.

"We worked with the Ashmont Grill, and the Four Seasons Hotel in Boston," said Waters. "We also worked with the Harvest restaurant of Cambridge and Lyndell's Bakery of Somerville."

Waters also noted that with the rapid rise in HIV and AIDS infections in the United States and North America, the Pie In the Sky program has grown tenfold since its inception.

"2010 has been our best year, we sold 14,000 pies and raised \$480,000," said Waters. "We are specialized needs programs, and people respond to them greater in a poor economy where they may donate even more." The pies sold in 2010 came in five different flavors: apple, pecan, pumpkin, sweet potato and diabetic apple. The pies could be purchased in one of two the ways.

"The pies can be ordered online as early as October," said Waters. "The pies could be purchased by any one of the 550 designated pie-sellers within their community."

The funds raised by the Pie in the Sky Program help to fund this specialized needs program. The \$25 dollars that people pay for a pie provide a week's supply of meals delivered to people who are too sick to shop or cook for themselves. These meals are prepared in

a new professionally certified kitchen in the Jamaica Plain and are delivered in a client area covering 200 miles from Boston.

"We work with 25 medically appropriate diets," said Waters. "We have a nutrition team that monitors each specialized diet."

The baked pies are delivered to a Pie Central headquarters three days prior to Thanksgiving. Community Servings has used the Park Plaza Castle, located off of Boylston Street in the Back Bay, as its pie central. Volunteers pick up the pies from the collaborating partners and deliver them to the Pie Central. The heat is shut off for the three days prior to Thanksgiving to protect the pies. Then the pies are sorted, checked, and boxed. They are later delivered to the 50 pickup sites in and around Boston. Other volunteers staff these sites to handout the pre-ordered pies to the buyers.

"Coldwell Banker Realty volunteers its offices and staff to individually hand out the pies" said Waters. "Coldwell Banker Realty has volunteered every year."

Along with Coldwell Banker Realty, the Pie in the Sky program has also gained a lot of support from individuals within the community.

"This is a great fundraising program that I would like to support in the future," said Howard, a Brookline resident. "The concept of selling pies to raise funds for a specialized needs program is an excellent concept."

Howards also spoke of the pies he bought.

"I just purchased two pies from Community Servings, Apple and Sweet Potato. The flavor and texture were great."

A Recovery Process: Part II

Aaron James
Spare Change News



I was broken. As the nurse took my pulse, I closed my eyes. I took in the moment, checked myself. I was at Bournewood hospital, for detox.

While I agreed to the hospitalization I was not ready to admit that once out I would quit drinking. I knew I needed help. Drugs and alcohol had gotten the best of me. I was homeless and thousands of dollars in debts to friends and family. My future looked dim. I had large goals but they formed into fantasies. I needed to take control of my life. That was why I was there, a couple of days to do some inner searching.

I had been to detox back in 2000 during my battles with Ecstasy. That was ten years ago. While I had quit Ecstasy for ten years, that was the height of my accomplishments. I still enjoyed a host of other drugs. While I had quit my drug of choice, I had become addicted to more of anything else. And no matter what other drug I was using, I was always drinking. In fact, I would not snort a line of cocaine if I did not have beer. I always had beer though! I could not sleep without a few beers in me. My worry every morning was not work, bills, or food. it was what and how much I would drink that day.

I was nervous. I had to get this. I had to put everything I had into what these people were going to teach me. I could not go on how I was. I opened my eyes as the nurse wrote down my pulse and moved on to taking my temperature. Patients walked by me on their way to the living room. Some would introduce themselves while others were too drugged to notice I was even there. Honestly, at that moment, I liked the drugged people. I wanted some of those meds and truthfully did not want to talk to anyone.

My stay at the Detox lasted six days. I could write a novel on the week spent there. For purposes of this article I want to hit on some of the highlights. Plus, it is important to note that I understand and must respect privacy laws. A big issue for me while I was there was figuring out what next. It was a detox so obviously after three days with their meds I felt much better. I was ready to drink again! But as the days passed and

I felt physically better sleeping without alcohol, I started to think maybe I can go without drinking again, maybe I should quit, maybe I can quit.

How though? My whole way of life was centered around drinking. After a long day of work, selling papers, on the phones raising money, whatever I was doing, a beer at the end of the day got me through the day. It damn near got me up in the mornings. There was no way I could quit. But the willingness to listen due to the circumstances I was in was present. And listen I did.

One counselor there had a very strong story. He was an odd ball to say the least, but had nineteen years under his belt. He was a hard-ass, to put it bluntly, old-school if you will. Every evening at seven an A.A. or N.A. commitment would take place. A commitment is when a group from another town visits a detox or rehab to hold a meeting for the people just entering, or trying to enter, sobriety. On night four in the commitment did not show. The counselor took his turn to tell his story to us. All I can say looking back is, Thank God the commitment did not show because this guy, man, he was something else. He got me teary eyes, focused, ready to move ahead sober.

He was older, sixties, but looked all of eighty. The wrinkles from years of drugging were clear as day on this man. He always started his groups leading off of something someone said in the room. Before he spoke, another patient said a few words, he lead of what she said.

“You know, I heard a lot of great stuff just then, really good, but you know what I did not hear?”

Someone screamed out, “Meetings.”

“Not one word about meetings, not one.” He looked at her, “You ranted on about all the [stuff] you did, the people you hurt, robbed, lied too, how big of a scum you became, great, we all can relate to that otherwise we wouldn’t be here. Why are you here? Some of you for the hundredth time! Why?” he started pacing the room as we were all silent, at awe, ready to hear this man out, “Because you didn’t go to meetings.”

The girl spoke up, “That’s not true, I went, and I hated it.”

“Really?” He asked.

“Stupid war stories just lead me back to using.”

“And why do you think your back here? You stopped going to meetings...look, when I decided to get sober there were no detoxes, half way houses

and all that stuff, you people get served hand over toe, they feed you, drug you up, provide you with a bed, I got none of that...all I had was meetings and you know what they told me when I went... keep coming. Keep coming and I will get my wife back. Keep coming and I will get my kids back. Imagine that, me, who stole from my kids who beat my kids, who sold my kids, I could have them back. I could have my wife back! I could have my dignity back! Just keep coming. Listen, identify, keep coming.

I had been to detox back in 2000 during my battles with Ecstasy. That was ten years ago. While I had quit Ecstasy for ten years, that was the height of my accomplishments. I still enjoyed a host of other drugs.

That’s it, there is nothing special to this, there is no magic to being sober, just keep coming.”

I raised my hand, he pointed at me, “But there is more to it.” I said.

“Is there? The answers are there. None of you are any different or any farther doomed then the people in those halls. You think you have it so rough, I’ve spent over half my life in prison, got rapped in prison and none of that ever kept me sober. They promised me, told me, all I had to do was keep coming, meetings after meetings, they say do ninety in ninety, I did like two hundred in ninety, I became addicted to meetings and guess what, I got my wife back, I got my kids back, I even have some dignity after all the [crap] I did.”

By the time the meeting was done I was sold, I could make it with meetings. And I was willing to give it a shot. Something, someone, gave me some hope. So my first plan was to leave the detox and attend meetings religiously. But where would I live? My roommates had kicked me out. So with the help of my parents I found a sober house in Roxbury to move into. Perfect, after the weekend, on Monday, I would go to Roxbury. My counselor said I should make some phone-calls to a couple of post-detox programs to attend before Roxbury. I agreed to make the calls Monday morning. I knew it would be tough to get a bed. I wanted to move on, get to the sober house, start work-

JAMES continued on page 8

Quality Dental Plan

A New Option for A Healthy Mouth

Liam Cunningham
Spare Change News

Quality Dental Plan, founded three years ago in Oregon by Dan Marut, DMD, is an innovative approach to dental care. In the years to come it could prove to be an effective alternative to traditional dental plans across the United States.

The mission statement reads: "At Quality Dental Plan, you save money for the whole family! No ongoing monthly premiums, no cap on services, no hidden fees and no extra charges. Our mission is to help keep family dentistry affordable by eliminating the high monthly premiums and high administrative costs associated with dental insurance plans. QDP offers local, high quality dental care at discount prices!"

Dr. Marut's plan is showing encouraging signs as it continues to expand across the United States. "I created the Quality Dental Plan three years ago and we went national last November," said Marut. QDP is spreading quickly; it is already up and running in 28 states. "When people lost their dental benefits, they stopped coming to the dentist. We needed to create for people some sort of benefit that would get them back to the dentists.

"Our solution with Quality Dental Plan was to get the people these benefits in a way that would get them to come to the dentist, sooner rather than later. Dental issues are much easier and cheaper to address early on," said Marut.

Dr. Marut went on to discuss the wide range of benefits offered by Quality Dental Plan: "One in three people don't go to the dentist, and the main reason is the cost. Quality Dental Plan gets people the benefits they need to get them to come into the office earlier. This saves them time, money, and significantly improves their health."

The importance of dental health is an issue that is grossly underestimated by a large majority of Americans. One of the most common misconceptions, which Dr. Marut stressed, is that dental issues are limited to the mouth. "Your mouth is the entryway to your body. Dental disease that effects the mouth can easily effect other parts of the body;

your lungs, your heart, your spleen, and more," said Marut.

The most common dental related problem amongst Americans is gum disease, which Dr. Marut stated afflicts around 80 % of Americans to some degree. Dr. Marut even compared gum disease to other serious bodily diseases: "The main thing with gum disease is that you don't feel it. Much like heart disease or even diabetes, you don't truly feel the effects until it is too late. It is slow and progressive and people don't realize something is wrong until the later stages."

Here Dr. Marut once again emphasized this is why it is so imperative that Americans get to the dentists frequently, so that their dental problems can be resolved and treated in the ear-



"It's a dental plan that shows social responsibility. Quality Dental Plan allows the dental office to work with the people who need it most."

liest stages, when they are the most treatable. Furthermore, in these early stages, treatment is much more affordable. Quality Dental Plan is designed to do just this: get patients into the office early and often.

"It's a dental plan that shows social responsibility. Quality Dental Plan allows the dental office to work with the people who need it most."

According to Dr. Marut, Quality Dental Plan is able to offer such affordable prices mainly due to the money saved by the dental office in cutting out insurance companies. "Our plan eliminates the 'middle man' created by insurance companies, which defrays cost for both the doctor and patient," said Marut. "Quality Dental plan creates a very direct relationship between the dentist and the patient. By cutting out the insurance companies, the dental office saves money because they are eliminating the massive amounts of paperwork and bureaucracy that come

with dealing with these companies. The dental office is then able to pass these savings along to the patients in the form of benefits."

QDP's headquarters in Oregon works to customize the plan for each individual office's set of circumstances. "Each dental office controls their own plan. We show these different dental offices how to best implement their plan based on their own unique situations," said Marut.

This past summer, Massachusetts legislators passed sweeping budget cuts that eliminated many critical dental services for thousands of citizens, provided by Mass Health. These cuts have and will continue to have a negative impact on the dental health of a substantial chunk of the state's population, particu-

larly low-income citizens. Since these cuts, many Mass citizens have searched for an affordable dental care option. If QDP continues to grow in popularity, it could be one of those alternatives in the years to come.

The dental office of Mark Fried, Dmd, in Framingham, Massachusetts, is currently the only location in the state offering the Quality Dental Plan. Even there, it is in the earliest stages of development.

"It's a discount plan for people with no insurance or insurance that has been used up," said Fried, who went on to explain the logistics of how the plan exactly works. "The patient pays an up-front fee. This fee covers two yearly cleanings plus X-rays and whitening services. Patients also receive a 20 percent discount on fillings. The up-front fee the patient must pay is less than what they would have to pay if they went through insurance."

Dr. Fried first staked an interest in a

plan like QDP when he was fresh out of dental school. Now, with his own practice, he has the opportunity to put the plan into action. "Twenty-five years ago when I first got out of school I worked in an office that had a plan a lot like this and I thought it was a really nice idea. Then just recently I saw Dan's [Marut's] company."

When asked how he felt QDP could help low-income and homeless citizens in Massachusetts, Fried responded by stating, "Well, our plan isn't free. Our patients still have to pay an up-front fee and pay some smaller fees as they go, but these fees are all diminished. If a patient is financially stable enough to make these payments, the Quality Dental Plan will definitely save them significant amounts of money."

Based on the early stages of implementation his office is in with QDP, Dr. Fried expressed serious optimism regarding its future potential. "We are up and running here with the Quality Dental Plan and it's going well. It's generating a lot of interest."

The cuts to Mass Health dental benefits over the summer have proven to be a devastating blow to thousands of Massachusetts's citizens. In assessing whether or not Quality Dental Plan represents a feasible option for Massachusetts's citizens struggling to find affordable dental care, it truly depends on each individual's financial situation. For those who are homeless or operating on a very low income, the Quality dental plan is not going to be an option due to the up-front fee that patients are required to pay. But for those with slightly more income to work with, Quality Dental Plan is something worth looking into for saving money and receiving adequate dental work.

In this situation, like many, Massachusetts's homeless and impoverished citizens will once again find themselves between a rock and a hard place. Having lost many of the care options provided by Mass Health, this largely ignored sector of Massachusetts's population will continue to struggle in the realm of dental health, which for many is the least of their overall problems.



The Only Place To Go Is Here

Ryk McIntyre

This world is lost,
but the last thing it needs
is a sense of direction.
We can't trust maps anymore,
not when we put them on the table
and they just lie there.
It's time we think outside.

Pretend you can fly—
if you flew east, as hard as you could, far enough
to circle the world, you would come home again?
Yes, but from the west
If you go north enough you fly over the pole
and you're flying south, until you fly over the pole,
headed north. You're traveling in circles,

because this world is bipolar,
and maps are part of the problem.
It's not that they don't lead us places,
but there are things we think maps are telling us:
here is better than there.
We're better than them. So we have wars
of north vs. south, east against west,
as if right and wrong were just
"location, location, location..."

Maps trick us into believing
we don't belong to the land,
the land belongs to our territory.
We've forgotten our hearts know what home looks like,
We keep fighting over real estate.

And we're just as confused about "up."
We mistake plans to conquer space for spiritual ascension;
think, if there's a perfect place;
we'll only find it up in Heaven,
but when we find it, we will map it & it will be ours.

But if someone else, even
from a culture we call "enemy"
sought their own Heaven,
following different cartography;
even if they took off from the other side
of the world from us, guess what?
They would still be flying "up."
So it won't matter who wins that race.
Once we're out there in space

the only place left to go is "further away."
If the human can't agree,
not on where we came from,
but why...
the only perfect place
we might have reached
will be lost.

This is how maps lead us
off-course. Their promises of a place
we can call Home will only trick us
into losing our way if they get us to forget
this simple truth:

The person on the opposite side of my world
is just like me: a human being
trying to find their way home.

It's time we think bigger than maps
and treat words like Us and Them,
Me and You,
as gradations, not absolutes.
We'd see the differences between us
are illusions.
Kinda like the black borderlines
on a map... they're not really there

unless we choose to see them,
and treat them as more important
than the maps we all carry here.
In our hearts
we are already home,
where "X" marks the spot,
because "You Are Here."
Wherever else you go in life,
here is where you begin.

If the world can discover this someday,
it won't be maps that save us.
What will matter is that, if we follow one,
we use it as a guide, not a bible God gave us.

What matters is people who believe
even if we don't know where we're going yet,
we can all get there, together, if we try.
You know, the people who believe
that people can fly.



Poems may be submitted to: Marc D. Goldfinger,
76 Unity Ave. Belmont MA, 02478

or email: sparechangepoetry@gmail.com. SCN cannot return poetry
submissions, and authors will be contacted only if their poems are published.

Every Thursday
Squawk Coffeehouse, 9 pm
1555 Mass Ave., Cambridge
Open mike for poets and musicians.

Every Saturday
Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm
106 Prospect St., Cambridge
\$3-5 suggested donation.
671- 354-5287

Every Sunday
Lizard Lounge Poetry Slam, 7 pm
1667 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
\$5. 671- 547-0759

Every Monday
Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm
106 Prospect St., Cambridge
\$4 suggested donation.
617-354-5287

Every Wednesday
Boston Poetry Slam, 8 pm
Cantab Lounge, 738 Mass. Ave.,
Cambridge
\$3. 21+. 617-354-2685

Second Thursday of Every Month
Tapestry of Voices, 6:30 pm
Borders, 10 School St., Boston
Free. 617-557-7188

Second Tuesday of Every Month
Newton Free Library, 7 pm
330 Homer St. 617-796-1360

Third Saturday of Every Month
Boston Haiku Society meeting,
2-6 pm
Kaji Aso Studio,
40 St. Stephen St., Boston
\$3. 617-247-1719

Poetry event listings may be
submitted to
sceditor@homelessempowerment.org

‘Tis the Season to be Jolly

Jacques Fleury
Spare Change News

We have been through a lot this year: celebrating the second year of Barak Obama’s presidency and some wondering if they made the right choice; the announcement of the impending end of the war in Iraq; and last but not least, the floundering economy, which had some losing their jobs and homes and those who hitherto never thought they would be homeless in their lifetimes, found themselves succumbing to the dire economy and facing homelessness for the first time. Yet still I, like you, am dreaming of a white Christmas and am most definitely ready to put 2010 behind me because “tis the season to be jolly!”

Soon, the snow will cascade from the December sky, adorning trees that sparkle with shimmering lights on branches that seemingly spread like open arms as if to beckon blessings from above. And I, subdued with holiday cheer and even a little bit of jeer, recall memories of doves and wondering if the world will ever succumb to peace and love. So I began to ponder about what Christmas really means, at least to me.

I am not here to harangue you on the true meaning of Christmas, I am simply offering my understanding of this most wondrous time of year and you may or may not identify with me, but hopefully you will. You see, Christmas to me is about more than just ceremony. It is about more than the money we spend to impress our loved ones. Christmas to me is about celebrating life, family, and community. It’s about enjoying one another’s company and appreciating

each other’s humanity. And by humanity, I mean both positive and negative characteristics that make us all who we are. Anyone can love someone who loves you back, but the real challenge is to love someone who hates your guts.

Some of us may not be aware of this, but often our love is conditional. And I include myself in this category. How many times have you find yourself falling out of love with someone because you suddenly discover that they are (taking a deep breath) “human” and therefore “broken?” We are all broken pearls along the road. I’ll give you a near perfect example, I say near perfect because I’ve finally come to realize that as long as I remain a human being, I will never experience this great illusion of perfection. I once thought that my mother’s love was “perfect.” She herself claims that she had me because she wanted someone to love completely and who will love her back completely. But in her then youthful innocence, she did not foresee that her love for me would eventually be tested. The same thing applies to me; I did not foresee that my love for her would be tested in return. Ultimately time proved to be the great enemy of complacency. My mom, who I saw as the greatest thing since the invention of the internet, became suddenly “human” and essentially imperfect when she, in anger over something I’ve done, used words as sharp as a newly sharpened #2 pencil with the intent to cut deep into my heart and psyche. And I, in overwhelming shock over her hurtful and abusive words, return the favor with even greater intensity than she. The whole ordeal was no flower arrange-

ment, that’s for sure. It was that day that I realized that if my own mother, who claimed to love me more than her own life, could inflict such hurt upon me, than I reasoned that anyone else could do the same and again, myself included. It was during this dire revelation that I discovered human imperfection to negate any prior illusions of “human perfection” which fundamentally is an oxymoron. It was because of that incident that I reasoned to look to someone greater than my mighty mother for unrestricted love. It was at that time that I gleefully looked to Jesus Christ for eternal and unconditional love.

This brings me to speculating about the true meaning of Christmas. I truly believe that we can all find happiness with one another, granted that we do this one thing: learning to accept one another because of our humanity and not in spite of it. I know that a lot of you have different conceptions about religion and the whole idea of who God. I am not saying that my God is necessarily your God. My main concern is that you believe in something anything. For I truly believe that believing in anything will fill you with hope since hope is the light that consumes all darkness.

Growing up in Haiti, in the middle Port-au-Prince city, I remember when the Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier government used to have Christmas for the kids in the Haitian White House. I remember the first time I heard of Santa Clause, except in Haiti, he is called “Papa Noel.” I remember being in total awe of Papa Noel. I thought that he was this magical being who was going to rescue me from the ills and perils of my

childhood. I grew up with an abusive alcoholic stepfather. I remember the day my mom told me that she was going to marry him, I felt like the floor suddenly and violently collapsed right from under me and I knew right then that my hitherto magical childhood was over. I even stopped believing in Papa Noel and gained a premature, mature, composure and shaking my head in perceived adult mentality where I saw other kids fall over themselves to get to Papa Noel. But now, all these years later, I am trying to rekindle my fascination with the holiday season. As I walk around town at night, I bask in the glitter of the glimmering trees and exuberant smiles on the people’s faces and I start thinking about what Christmas really means.

The true meaning of Christmas for me is essentially love yourself and one another as you are; knowing that you and your life are “perfect” in the eyes of God. The true meaning of Christmas is not about out doing your neighbor’s Christmas decorations, or buying the most expensive gift for your loved ones. At the threat of getting too syrupy, the true meaning of Christmas should be about lending a smile to someone who bears a frown, offering a hug to someone in tears, and providing food and shelter to someone in need. The true meaning of Christmas is about seeing one another as family and not as enemies. Don’t let the melanin in your neighbor’s skin determine whether or not he/she is worthy of your respect. Don’t let the size of your bank account or family breeding determine your worth or your neighbor’s worth.

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ing, attend meetings, and move ahead, living sober.

Monday morning I made the phone calls. I was excited to get to my new home. The first two places I called had no beds. My call to Danvers was a little different. The voice on the other end of the phone asked me a few questions about my drug history. Yes, a bed was available but she needed to talk to my counselor. That conversation happened quickly and at ten a.m. I was told they accepted me to their ten day post-detox program.

I woke up that morning thinking I was going to end up that afternoon in Roxbury. However, by noon I was checking myself into another place, not sure if this was what I wanted to do. I

really wanted to start proving myself to others, to start the process of recovery out in the real world. I wanted to know who was going to give me the time of day? I understood that some people would never want to talk to me again. I would not want to have anything to do with the alcoholic me. Going to Danvers only postponed all of that.

Danvers quickly became the ten most important days in my life. While I left Bournewood ready to be an A.A. meeting maker, I ended up leaving Danvers not so keen on the idea of A.A. A dramatic change, and that was only the start. I listened and gave each day I was there everything I had to give, and as a result I left Danvers a new man. I would not have been ready to deal with the aftermath of my carnage after Bournewood. And while I wanted to

leave, and was ready to leave, Danvers at many points, I finished the program. And in doing so my life is slowly coming back together. I must be thankful, everyday sober, that those people I truly never wanted to deal with losing in my life are still there for me, a point I will continue to press in each article. I did not know anyone was still there for me when I made the choice for more treatment. My nervousness quickly turned into anxiousness, which leads us to Danvers...

Many folks choose to go back to the streets after Bournewood. Good luck to you. You maybe physically over the withdrawal symptoms, but are you truly mentally over them? Do you even want to be? Can you sit with your thoughts? When you walk by the bar, by yourself, are you ready to walk by

it... on the twentieth time? When you get angry because your past caught up to you, can you really deal with the situation without drinking? I wasn’t after Bournewood, and no fault to the program, it is not their purpose to do so. Detox’s are there to get you over the withdrawal systems. They truly cannot do anymore for you without denying someone else those basic needs. More treatment is suggested and direly needed, but not mandated. I choose more treatment and in doing so I have stayed sober through many events that would have otherwise lead me to drink. Do not applaud me, congratulate me, or anything of that like, not yet. But please, please, at the very least, still believe in me, have faith in me, because at the very least, I have earned that, proven it is not in vain...Haven’t I?

Holiday Bliss, Not Holiday Stress

Dr. Mary M. McLaughlin
Spare Change News

Most of us take the holiday season w-a-a-a-y too seriously.

Watching people as they go about the business of observing this necessary tradition, putting up that particular tree, sending out politically correct cards and selecting the perfect gift, all while staying on a budget, observing ship-by dates and trying to remain holiday cheerful, often seems like watching a cluster of robots as they perform carefully programmed tasks.

Holiday Wonder

Do you remember the woman who bellowed, “Where’s the beef?” in a television commercial?” Sometimes I feel like screaming “Where’s the joy?”

Growing up in my house, the holiday season usually deteriorated into a month-long ordeal of frantic preparation and financial apprehension for a payoff of not very much fun. My parents became increasingly frustrated and exhausted over time and, more often than not, angry arguments ensued.

My father was a politician and his highest priority was for my mother to get hundreds of holiday greeting cards signed, addressed and mailed out to his constituents at the earliest possible date. My mother disliked politics and preferred to spend her time selecting and purchasing thoughtful gifts for all six of us children.

My mother was not a great cook and she rarely did any baking, yet every year she mercilessly compared her uninspired productions to those of other neighborhood mothers who seemed to effortlessly generate mountains of delectable holiday goodies and treats.

Since she was not a very creative person either, the traditional holiday crafts and decorating challenges were mostly exercises in exasperating futility for her as well, especially since my father insisted upon putting up a holiday tree every year that the high school principal

delivered to us annually as a gift.

Problem was, the tree had already served as part of the decorations for a holiday event held each year in the high school auditorium and it was always way too big for our living room, but my father would put it up anyway.

We lived in the same great big, old historic house in Massachusetts where my father had been raised. Since he wanted our house to reflect the holiday wonderland his parents had always created, every year he installed electric candles in all of our windows in an ambitious lighting display that inevitably presented him with numerous, frustrating and invective-generating electrical wiring challenges, and the exterior lights presented even greater challenges. Despite all this, bulbs blew out repeatedly and the light fixtures and displays both inside and outside were regularly compromised by my four rowdy brothers.

Since a steady stream of visitors dropped off holiday gifts for my parents, our house had to be kept in visitor-ready condition during the entire season, and my mother needed to be continually prepared to answer the doorbell whenever it rang, properly dressed and cheerfully behaving like a delighted and joyful holiday hostess, which she often was not.

Visitors were invited in. We served coffee or cocktails, depending upon the time of day. As my father often reminded us, those visitors were nearly all voters and they certainly deserved to be warmly welcomed at our house.

For my sister and for me, the holiday season mostly involved helping our mother by taking coats, preparing



drinks, emptying ash trays, washing cups and glasses and buying and wrapping the holiday gifts for our brothers, since our mother had little time to shop.

There was not much respite on Christmas Day either. My mother cooked a huge, traditional holiday dinner every year and afterwards entertained numerous family members who came and went, most of them my father’s relatives who really didn’t like my mother and who hardly ever spoke to her at all.

My parents were thoughtful and reflective people of great intelligence. Yet every year, year after year, we celebrated the holidays by doing all of this all over again in solemn, ritual and lock-step observation of tradition.

If they could do it all over again one more time, I think they’d each say “Bah Humbug!”

“Children grow up so fast” they’d probably continue, “ so lock the doors, recycle the lights, cancel the cards, share thoughtful gifts with each other, go to

see a holiday movie, play outside, enjoy the luxury of time together and don’t bother with any people you don’t enjoy seeing, who get drunk or who are rude. Forget about baked goods, over-the-top gifts and dusty decorations; light candles, build a cozy fire, bring in fresh flowers and eat wholesome, nutritious food.”

My holiday wish for everyone this year is that you will all have a blessed and relaxing holiday cherishing the people you love most, doing the things you like to do with the people who are closest to you, while focusing on the truly amazing natural wonders of the season.

Happy holidays,

Mary McLaughlin, PhD, President
Emotional Education Services, LLC

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The true meaning of Christmas is seeing one another as one. The true meaning of Christmas is about celebrating our legacies not deficiencies. It’s about fraternity and diversity, not hostility and bigotry; collaboration not division; it’s about being giving, joyful, and thankful for what we have and not

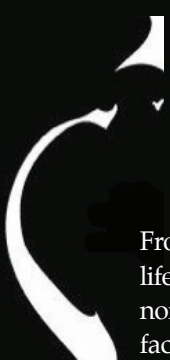
what we don’t have. Finally, it’s about the beauty and miracle of creation: the birth of Jesus Christ.

Even I struggle with these issues every day, so I speak from experience. I come face to face with anger and prejudice constantly, partly due to negative societal conditioning. But I constantly aim to eschew negative thought patterns to reflect a healthier approach. I

use the following mantra: “Be a source of love and light in the face of prejudice and hatred.” And only then will you finally learn the true meaning of Christmas. Joeux Noel et Bonne Anne a tous (Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All)!

Jacques Fleury is a Poet, Author & Columnist. His book: “Sparks in the Dark:

A Lighter Shade of Blue, A Poetic Memoir” about life in Haiti & America was featured in the Boston Globe. Sample or buy the book at: www.lulu.com. 20% of proceeds will go to Haiti charity Partners in Health. For personal appearances or comments contact Jacques at: haitianfirefly@gmail.com.



Voices From The Streets

Voices from the Streets — a forum for those whose voices are too often ignored. From narratives to opinion to advice, these writers portray a unique perspective on life that might otherwise go unnoticed. Below, find that turning an ear towards those normally silenced opens the door to understanding and relating to those who have faced life on the street.

Letting In The New Year



Marc D. Goldfinger
Spare Change News

It was 11 degrees on the outside thermometer this morning. It is two days after my 65th birthday, December 8th. If I had known I was going to live this long I would have taken better care of myself. I’m actually not complaining. I’m really lucky to be here. It’s Grace, my friends, Grace.

I was born in an era that was so much slower than it is today. It was a big deal when my parents bought our first television set. I can remember when we picked up the phone and, instead of a dial tone, an operator would ask us what number we wanted.

Do any of you remember what a party line was? It wasn’t someone directing you to a gala throw-down, it was when you shared a phone line with a number of families. Each family had a certain type of ring-tone so you would know if the call was for you or them.

Plenty has changed in just a few decades. I have a magazine with old ads in it. It shows a young couple sitting together on a hillside, she’s leaning towards him while he lights a cigarette, and it says “Chesterfield—Blow some my way.” Hmmm.

I was reading the Boston Globe, as usual, and someone is suing a cigarette company for handing out free samples to kids in the neighborhood. I’ll tell you, it really happened and not just in poor neighborhoods. I grew up in North Arlington, New Jersey until I was 10 years old and I remember a car would drive around and give us little packs of free cigarettes with four to six butts in a pack. I moved from North Arlington to Livingston, New Jersey when I was 10 1/2 years old and I was already a smoker.

Camels, if you please. Sometimes Lucky Strike. Before the time of Joe Camel. In this magazine I’m looking at, they are showing a Joe Camel ad—the camel is dressed to the nines, has a pool cue in his hand and by his head it says “Smooth Character.”

Right below that ad, it shows Joe in a hospital bed, hooked up to an intravenous bottle, and next to him it says “Joe Chemo.” The magazine is called AdBusters and it is filled with good stuff like that. I can’t find it right now, but there was another ad in the magazine that shows good old Ronald Reagan smoking a cigarette, and it says something like “All you’ll ever need.”

In this era, we are bombarded with advertisements. If you are watching a show on television,

when it breaks for the ads, you will see at least eight ads before the show you are watching goes back on. When you are waiting in line at Shaw’s supermarket, there is a TV by the computer register so you can watch non-stop ads while you wait.

You do wait much longer in line now then when I was young. I worked in a big grocery store called Shop-Rite when I was in high school and a cash register just totaled the numbers up like a manual adding machine. The faster the checker went, the sooner the customer would get out of the store.

Now, the reason it takes so long is that you, the customer, wait while the computer takes inventory for the store. A person used to get paid to walk the store and count the stock. The computer put that person out of a job.

I refuse to use the self-checkouts. Each self-checkout puts another person out of work. It’s much better for the company. No health benefits to pay, no employee to deal with, another person on the breadline going to the food pantry.

I hate the computers that answer the phone for all the major corporations. It takes a long time to get to a real person and the computer doesn’t have that flash of understanding that a real person on the line would have. By the way, that computer represents another person out of work, on the bread line, at the local food pantry.

Medical care has changed quite a bit too. It is true that we have made major medical advances and many people live through illnesses that would have killed them years ago. But I remember when we were sick and didn’t have to travel to the doctor; the doctor came to us. Another change was that the doctor knew us; we didn’t have to see a different physician every time we went to the clinic.

One devastating change that has taken place is that now insurance companies determine the type of care we get. In many instances, the physician’s hands are tied, and he or she has to go along with the pellet counter at the insurance company. We’re forced to leave the hospital before we should if the insurance company says so. And it usually does.

Everything is HIGH SPEED now also. From the minute we wake up to the minute we go to sleep, the majority of our time is structured by the complexity of the networks we must deal with. If the billing company that is hired out by the hospital makes a mistake—it takes hours of frustrating time on the phone; jumping from

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tales from the curb

Christmas Wishes



James Shearer
Spare Change News

As we welcome Santa into our homes I would like for him to leave a couple of presents under the tree for a few people.

For Obama: A Spine

Now I know a few moonbats may get upset at me for that tag line. Then again, maybe not even they are angry with him over the Bush tax cuts. When the Republicans blocked the extensions for unemployment benefits, those of us in the know saw this as nothing more than political blackmail to force the Dems into extending the Bush tax breaks for the wealthy. This was Obama’s chance to take a hard line and call the Republicans’ bluff. I have no doubt that the country would have cheered him on. Instead, having been spooked by the mid-terms, he caved in and made a deal. It would have given him and the lame duck Congress a much needed final hurrah. The incoming congress, while full of vigor, would have been hard pressed to fight him, especially the Tea Party members who are all about not paying taxes. It would have created a split between them and the old guard right wing, and who knows, the President might have gained some new allies in the new congress. But no, he took the easy way out. As many of you know, I’ve never been a Deval Patrick fan, but maybe the President should take a page out of his old friends book. Patrick stood his ground in the casino fight, and even though people like me were disappointed that we won’t be getting casinos in Mass anytime soon, I have to admire the Gov’s stand. It’s probably what got him re-elected. Hopefully Obama will grow a set before 2012. If not, well Hello Sarah.

For Turner Supporters: A Real Hero

A couple of weeks ago, Chuck Turner was booted off the Boston City Council after he was convicted of taking a bribe. As usual, Turner blamed everyone but himself for what happened, even going so far as to compare himself to another crooked politician and comparing his plight to that of Rosa Parks and other civil rights leaders. The crazy part is how people in the council chamber, and outside it, continue to support him. To those folks, I say Turner doesn’t deserve your support. Granted, in the past he did some great things and really helped the community. But he betrayed you by taking a bribe, so everything he did before that, doesn’t mean a hill of beans. To make it even worse he was earning a damn good salary, so why sell out for a meager \$1,000? He flushed your trust and loyalty down the toilet, CHEAP. He also played the race card, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, and Medgar Evers made big sacrifices to get our race where it is today. They did it so crooks like him could run for office. As far as the FBI setup, they went after him because he was a suspect in the first place. He doesn’t deserve your support or your pity. He deserves your scorn.

For the Homeless: Hope

The other day as I was going home, I noticed how many homeless people there were on the streets. I notice it all the time, but this time of year I notice it more. I know what it feels like to be on the streets during the holidays. It’s a hopeless feeling, you’re cold and alone, no family or friends. You laugh and joke with others who are on the street, but it’s only to mask the pain. No one should have to endure that kind of pain, EVER, so I am asking readers to give those who have no hope, HOPE. How, you ask? Kindness, simple human kindness, a smile, a kind word, the time of day, something! Not just now, but year round. You may not think it helps much, but as someone who has been there, it does.

Becka Traite Going Through the System

Becka Traite
Spare Change News

My name is Becka Traite, and I'm a 20-year-old, homeless, mentally disabled person. I rarely drink, and I haven't in quite some time. I don't smoke tobacco, and I've never done any drugs. I'm homeless because of my mental illnesses.

I guess this all started a little after I got diagnosed with bipolar disorder a few years ago. That, on top of severe anxiety disorder, in which I get horrible panic attacks with the smallest or no trigger, lead to me being hospitalized in a psychiatric ward.

I'm a high school drop-out, but don't let that fool you. I left school in the spring when I was 17. Two weeks later, I took my GED test and passed with above average scores. That fall, I started attending Mass Bay Community College. But then everything went wrong.

The pressure of full time classes, on top of a bad medication change, drove me to the mental hospital. I was 17 when I was diagnosed as bipolar, and in the three years since then, I've been hospitalized over five times.

Hospitals are all the same. After a while, you stop noticing the differences. The food is disgusting, most of the staff is aloof, and the patients are odd, to say the least. Being on a psychiatric ward is both like and unlike the movie version of a mental hospital. You get your stereotypical crazy people, schizophrenics, and sometimes a rare case with Dissociative Identity Disorder, also known as Multiple Personality Disorder. There's usually those who make a career of being on a ward. There's free food and a warm bed, so it's better than prison, from what I hear. There are people who have attempted suicide, but didn't have a solid plan, or got found in time. Sometimes you encounter people with dual diagnoses, those with an addiction on top of another mental illness. Sometimes they are kept on a separate ward, but often they're not. And then there's people who seem normal, act normal, and are normal, and just couldn't deal with life for a while. I guess I am one of those. I have trouble coping with things some-



times.

So I was out of the mental hospital for about a year when someone I knew hung himself. I didn't find him, thank the gods, but it still hit me hard. Well, one thing lead to another, and I checked myself back into the hospital. It helped a lot. But my family got sick of me being sick, they got tired of my mental illness, and they didn't understand why I kept having to be hospitalized. So they kicked me out of the house the day before I was due to be discharged. That, on top of my acquaintance's suicide, was way too much. I got angry, expressed myself inappropriately by kicking a wall, which I later found out was brick, and fractured two bones in my foot as a reward. I had no place to go and I was furious about it. But then I got lucky.

My best friend, whom my family had fostered when her parents lost custody of her, decided that she was going to take me in. She said that I could stay as long as I needed. I didn't want to outstay my welcome, so I started calling the Department of Mental Health to see

if any youth housing was available, and calling different woman's shelters. After a month and a half of making calls every morning, I finally found a dry shelter that had a bed open.

From what I can tell, shelter life is different from place to place. There are differences in the curfews, general rules, and all-around feel of the place. It's still a big change for me. For one thing, to avoid theft, I have to label everything, and I mean everything. Underthings included, and even Mr. Moo, my stuffed cow. I was also used to living in relative comfort. I could shower when I wanted to, watch my favorite television shows, *Glee* & *House*, when they were on, and get home whenever I felt like it. Now, I have to schedule my showers and laundry, maneuver my way into a spot in the television room, and be back in the house by 7 p.m., no exceptions.

There's still a lot of work to do. I applied for SNAP, also known as food stamps, and Section 8 housing. I'm working on my federal and state housing forms almost as I type this. And I'm working on my mental issues. I meet with a psychiatrist every week. I go to support groups for people with bipolar disorder. I go to different programs for young adults, programs like Youth on Fire, which, if I may plug shamelessly, is one of the kindest, most understanding, youth oriented program/centers I've ever been to, and I've been to quite a few in my time.

My parents and I are still in contact, which means I can hang out with my 16-year-old brother without him having to sneak around. I'm back in school majoring in Liberal Arts/Psychology, with plans to transfer out. In my dreams, it's always a transfer to Lesley University. I plan to become an adolescent therapist. I want young adults to get treated better than I was treated. I plan on becoming a Certified Peer Specialist (someone who works with others with similar mental issues as themselves, telling their story, and being a mentor) if I can find a training program that is accepting new people.

I guess all I can say is: once you hit the bottom the only place to go is up, and I'm working on heading up.

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computer to computer, calling one number to the next, and sometimes winding up back at the first number we called while the problem persists.

We live in a time of miracles, but we also survive through twisted times. Our civilization is now globally linked; everything is connected and because the people who make the most money trade in commodities but don't produce anything of value, many of the countries of the world are going bankrupt.

If I owed my credit card company the type of debt the United States is now carrying, I would be in deep trouble. Hmmm. We are in deep trouble. And why is it that schools, health care, and

other social services come last in priority, but the war budget is never lacking? Right now, our government is arguing about our budget but no one is talking about how much the war is costing our civilization.

Then there's the Earth we live on, or should I say, the Earth we live off of. I know we recycle, and that's good. But just think of how much we throw away every day—just think of how many toilets flush waste into our precious water systems every day—just think of how much poison flows out of exhaust pipes of cars, trucks and buses every day into our limited atmosphere—just think.

Well, maybe we better not think. It's the holiday season and we all want to have a good time. And doesn't having

a good time mean consume, consume, consume, buy, buy, buy, don't stop to think, don't stop to think, don't stop to think, you don't have time for that because our time is really running out if we don't change our ways.

Hey, who's in charge here anyway? I don't think anyone really knows because of all the secrecy in big business, big government, and big war espionage.

Look, I'll tell you what. You and me, we'll just stick our noses to the grindstone and when we get home we'll sit and watch advertisements on television that will tell us what to buy, and then we'll go out and do it. I'm not going to cop out; I'm part of the problem too.

Let's just stop and reflect a while on what we can do to make this a better

world. Who can we help? What can we do to make someone else's day a little better? What action do we need to take to stop the war machine?

I'll tell you what. I don't care what you call your God; He/She/It is all right with me. Just don't hurt me or the ones I love and I'll do the same. Can we break bread together and make this a better world? I'm ready for the change. Maybe you are too.

Let's do it!

Marc D. Goldfinger is a formerly homeless vendor who is now housed. He can be reached at junkietroll@yahoo.com

Q&A with Allan Clear, Executive Director of the Harm Reduction Coalition

Adam Sennott
Spare Change News

This past November, Spare Change News participated in a collaborative article with the Street News Service on harm reduction. For part of the article, which was written by Katie Hyslop,



Spare Change interviewed Allan Clear, Executive Director of the Harm Reduction Coalition. The Hrc is a national organization that provides education and training in harm reduction counseling techniques, safer injection techniques, hepatitis C, mental health, or even how to prevent a drug over-

dose. While several of his quotes were used in Hyslop's article, the interview is featured below.

Spare Change News: What does harm reduction mean?

Clear: Harm reduction for me is a philosophy. It's a way of thinking about how one uses drugs. What we do in this country is we make drugs as unsafe as they possibly can be, and we do that through laws, which means that if you get busted with drugs you go to prison for a long time. And that's designed as a deterrent to make people stop using drugs, which obviously it isn't. We do things like take syringes out of circulation, which has caused epidemics of hepatitis and HIV. So harm reduction is a way of trying to make drug use safer for people who use drugs, without demanding that they stop using drugs. So it's philosophical like that, but then there is also harm reduction services, such as syringe exchange, overdose prevention, drug testing, pill testing. If someone is going to use drugs on a Friday night, you'd like to know what your going to put into your system, safe injection facilities, a place where people can go and inject drugs under the supervision of medical staff. Prescription heroin is also classed as a harm reduction intervention.

It's also something that drug users do for themselves, it's not something you can make someone do. You give someone a set of options and then they apply them themselves. You can't make someone use drugs in a certain way.

SCN: So this isn't something a court could order someone to attend?

Clear: No, it would be good if it was a diversion program, because if someone could go and volunteer at a harm reduction agency or a needle exchange program or something like that, that would be a good thing.

SCN: What legislation has been passed in terms of harm reduction, and what positive and negative effects have they had?

Clear: Well, one of the things that has been really good, well this year really, since last December is that the federal ban on funding on syringe exchange was finally removed, which means, theoretically, that state departments of health can now allow people they fund to use federal money for syringe exchange. Unfortunately it hasn't really happened yet. No state is actually doing it because they are still waiting for guidelines from the federal government. So that's been a really good one. I think that state laws that change access to sterile injection equipment have been very good because that's changed the face of the HIV epidemic and hopefully will have an impact on hepatitis C, meaning that it's easier to obtain a syringe from a pharmacy now then it used to be for a few years.

SCN: Could you elaborate on that?

Clear: It used to be, like in New York City or in New York State for example, you could not purchase a syringe at a pharmacy, and you couldn't possess it if you did have one. Changes in laws means you can go to a pharmacy and buy a syringe.

SCN: Have any other laws changed that you think have had a positive or negative impact?

Clear: Overdose laws have been changed so that users can a prescription of a drug called Naloxone, which is a heroin antidote. So if someone is overdosing on heroin then they can be injected with this drug Naloxone, and it will revive them.

SCN: That couldn't happen before?

Clear: No, the problem is that most drugs are prescribed to be used on yourself, so with a drug like Naloxone you will be unconscious when it happens and someone else has to use the

drug on you. So there has been special exemptions made so that prescription laws can be changed so that you can be prescribed Naloxone and use it on someone else.

SCN: With the changes in legislation, have you noticed more needle exchanges forming?

Clear: I wouldn't say a lot more have popped up recently, and actually the economic times we're in, we've seen a few of them go away. In most ways it's been stable for the last few years. There's around just over 200 programs in the country, but I think that the older ones, and the bigger ones are very solid in the sense that they are full fledged social service organizations. And I think that the changing in the legislation around the federal ban on the funding on needle exchange means that some of those programs that have been around for a while, but have not strictly been legal, will be tolerated a lot more by their local health departments. Hopefully we can build upon that, and then they can get funding and be legal and everything.

SCN: Over the past five to ten years have you noticed a change in public perception towards needle exchange programs?

Clear: The funny thing is that topic opinion polls, the few that exist, have always been pretty consistent that the general public actually supports them. It's not overwhelming, but they are pretty consistent. It's something like 55 to 45, or 42 to 48 in favor of syringe exchange programs. The general public has always been fairly supportive, especially is it's explained what they are for. Mostly, the controversy comes from the level of our elected officials who oppose needle exchange, and also of course they drug free America type organizations who either don't understand the science or are unwilling to accept the science, basically on moral grounds, grounds of morality. So that's where we often get the opposition from. The opposition is usually not based in science, they are usually based on personal opinion, and that's the battle, because when people say it encourages drug use, there is no actually scientific evidence that it does do that. But people hear that, and they say well, there is something here, and there is nothing there that backs that up.

It's a way of thinking about how one uses drugs. What we do in this country is we make drugs as unsafe as they possibly can be, and we do that through laws, which means that if you get busted with drugs you go to prison for a long time.

Helping Hands

Cambridge and Boston are teeming with organizations ready to provide food and services to the homeless and the needy. If you're in need, they're there for you. If you can volunteer or donate, most of them could use your help.

Food

DAILY MEALS:

Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Community meals: 3pm weekdays, and 5pm Sundays
(no Saturdays).

Pine Street Inn
444 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-482-4944
Breakfast: 6 a.m.; brown bag lunches during the day;
Dinner: 5 p.m.; Chicken truck: 11:30 a.m.

Rosie's Place (women & children only, no boys over age 11)
889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322
Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Dinner: 4:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.
St. Francis House

39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211
Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.; Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Emergency sandwiches: Weekdays 2:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Salvation Army 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400
Lunch: 12 p.m.

Women's Lunch Place (women & children only, no boys over age 14, male presence discouraged)
67 Newbury St., Boston., 617-267-0200
Open Mon. – Sat., 7 a.m. – 2p.m.
www.womenslunchplace.org

WEEKLY MEALS

Monday:

Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston St., Boston
Food pantry: 9-11am (except holidays). Bring proof
of address.
Church of the Holy Resurrection
64 Harvard Ave., Allston, 617-787-7625
6 p.m. – 7 p.m. and take-out.
Mass. Ave. Baptist Church, 146 Hampshire St., Cambridge,
617-868-4853. 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday:

Church of the Advent
30 Brimmer St., Boston, 617-523-2377 6 p.m.
First Parish Unitarian Church
3 Church St., Cambridge, 617-876-7772
6 p.m. – 7 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.)
Faith Kitchen, Faith Lutheran Church
3311 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-354-0414
6:30 p.m. (second & last Tuesday of every month)

Wednesday:

Salvation Army 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge,
617-547-3400 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Thursday:

*Christ Church, Zero Garden St. Cambridge,
617-876-0200 6 p.m. St. James Church
1991 Mass. Ave, Cambridge
The Women's Meal (Women and children welcome)
5 p.m. – 7 p.m. (food pantry 3 days/week)
Union Baptist Church
874 Main St., Cambridge, 617-864-6885. 5 p.m.*

Friday:

Arlington St. Church
351 Boylston St., Boston, 617-536-7050 5 p.m.
Food Not Bombs
Boston Common (near Park St. T station), 617-522-8277
3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Mass. Ave. Baptist Church. 146 Hampshire St., Cambridge,
617-868-4853 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Saturday:

Pilgrim Church 540 Columbia Rd, Dorchester
approx 8:45 (Boston Commons, near fountain)
 We serve soup, pasta, coffee, juice, pastries, sandwiches,
 and clothing once a month.

12-1:30 pm
We offer a free community lunch, it is a cafe style, and we serve the guests, no standing in line. The meals are hot and made with love by our very talented chef

Sunday:

Food Not Bombs. 955 Mass Ave (617) 787-3436

Central Square Cambridge on Sundays from 3-5pm.

FOOD ASSISTANCE

Greater Boston Food Bank, 617-427-5200
Serves non-profit organizations such as
agencies, shelters, etc.
Office hours: 8 a.m. -- 4:30 p.m.
Project Bread • 617-723-5000; Hotline 1-800-645-8333
Referrals to food pantries throughout the city
Somerville Food Pantry • 617-776-7687
Food pantry: Mon, Tue, Fri 10 a.m. -- 2 p.m.; Wed 12 p.m.
-- 4 p.m.; Thu 1 p.m. -- 4 p.m.
Somerville residents only. Those unable to use other pan-
tries due to disability may call and ask for the Project Soup
Delivery Coordinator.

Brookline Food Pantry
15 St. Paul St., Brookline, 617-566-4953
Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Sat. 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Brookline residents only. Second-time visitors must present a letter from an advocate confirming that they are in need of food services.

CEOC (Cambridge Economic Opportunity Commission)
11 Inman St. (basement), Cambridge, 617-868-2900
Food pantry: Mon, Wed 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.; Tue 12 p.m. – 2 p.m.; Thu 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Closed Fri.

East End House
105 Spring St., Cambridge, 617-876-4444
Food pantry: Tue 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.; Fri 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Offers assistance in filling out food stamp applications (call for appointment).

Margaret Fuller Houses
71 Cherry St., Cambridge, 617-547-4680
Food pantry: Wed. 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
& 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.; Fri & Sat 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Pentecostal Tabernacle Church • 617-661-0222
Food pantry by appointment only; no deliveries or walk-
ins; referrals to other food pantries
Salvation Army
402 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400
Cambridge and Somerville residents only.
Food pantry: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. & by appointment
St. Francis House
39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211
Food pantry: Mon. – Fri. 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Sign up at the Counseling Desk in the St. Francis House
Day Center
St. James Church
1191 Mass. Ave, Cambridge
Food pantry: Tues. 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.; Thurs. 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.;
Sat. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

St. Paul's Ane Church
85 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, 617-661-1110
Food pantry: Wed. 12 p.m. -- 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. -- 12 p.m.
Western Ave. Baptist Church
299 Western Ave., Cambridge, 617-661-0433
Food pantry: Every second Wed., 10 a.m.
Zinberg Clinic Pantry at Cambridge Hospital 617-665-1606
For clinic patients with HIV / AIDS only.
Food pantry: Mon. -- Fri. 9 a.m. -- 5 p.m.
Fair Foods \$2 a bag;
CAMBRIDGE, St. Paul's Church
29 Mt. Auburn St
Harvard Sq. Red Line
Saturdays 10-11
SOMERVILLE, Cobble Hill Apts
84 Washington St. Back parking lot (near Sullivan Sq.)
Every other Wed. 11:30-1
Mt. Pleasant Apts. 70 Perkins St. (off Broadway)
Every other Wed. 1:30 - 2:30
Hearty Meals for All
Somerville Community Baptist Church
31 College Ave. Somerville, MA 02144
Free Community Meals the second Friday of every month
at 6:30pm

Robert Sondak:
Spare Change News Vendor/ writer is running a food workshop series; Harvest Coop Markets. 581 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139.617-661-1580. Tuesday December 7, 6 to 8pm. 2n floor Community Room. Located right above deli department. Free. Overview-discussion of diabetes and review type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

Homeless Concerns

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807
Computers, kitchen, space, children's room, and more.
Walk-ins welcome.
Women & children only (no boys over age 12)
Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-8pm, Sat 10am-3pm.

Cambridge Multi-Service Center
19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-349-6340
City-run agency with additional community non-profit partners. Works with Cambridge families in shelters, provides shelter referrals and other housing assistance. Employs housing specialists for elderly and disabled.
Office hours: Mon. 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Tue., Wed., Thu. 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Fri. 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Walk-ins accepted.
Cardinal Medeiros Center
25 Isabella St., Boston, 617-619-6960
Day center for homeless adults (50 years & older); mental health & nursing staff; help with housing searches.
Lunch served at 11:45 a.m.
Office hours: Mon. - Thu. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Fri. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Caspar
240 Albany St., Cambridge, 617-661-0600
Open 24 hrs / day; emergency shelter open 4:30 p.m. – 8 a.m.; Clients who leave in the morning may not return until 3 p.m.; Clients staying multiple nights must prove recent local residency.

CLASP (*Community Legal Assistance Services Project*)
19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-552-0623
Free legal clinic for Cambridge homeless at the Multi-Service Center every Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.
Ecclesia Ministries
67 Newbury Street, Boston., 617-552-0623
Weekly Schedule for the Common Cathedral:
Sunday
- Worship at Brewer's Fountain on Boston Common, 1 pm
- Gospel Reflection at St. Paul's Cathedral, 138 Tremont St., 2:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Monday

- Lunch at Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Eucharist & Healing (St. Paul's Cathedral) 1 p.m.
- Common Fellowship in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Wednesday

- Common Art at the Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Friday

- Common Cinema in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2:30 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Horizons for Homeless Children
617-445-1480; www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org
Horizons for Homeless Children is seeking volunteers to interact and play with children living in family, teen parent, and domestic violence shelters in Greater Boston. We offer daytime and evening shifts, so there is likely to be one that fits your schedule. A commitment of 2 hours a week for 6 months is required. The next training session will be Sat., Sept. 27, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Medical Walk-in Unit at Mass General Hospital
617-726-2707
Provides minor medical care for adults. Patients are seen in order of arrival. MGH accepts most insurances but requires copayments.
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat., Sun., Holidays 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed Thanksgiving & Christmas
Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Safe & Healthy men's overnight shelter program.

Rosie's Place
889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322
Women and children only (no boys over age 11)
Open 7 days a week; provides help with housing, medical care, job training, financial aid and education, legal services, rape crisis counselors, health specialists, and more.
St. Francis House
39 Boylston Street, Boston, 617-542-4211
Meals offered 365 days/yr.; food pantry open weekdays.
Offers a mailroom, open art studio, clothing lottery, computer library, support groups such as AA, showers, telephones, toothbrushes & razors, medical clinic, counseling & mental health services, housing counseling & stabilization services, & a women's center.
For more details on these services and for their specific times visit www.stfranchishouse.org
Starlight Ministries. 617-262-4567
Outreach van with food, clothing, blankets and worship
Hours: Wed. 8 p.m. by Park Street T station on the Boston Common.
Streetlight Outreach
Wednesdays at 8:00 PM
Harvard T-Station (The Pit); Porter Square T-Station
Volunteers work weekly to serve the homeless who live in Harvard and Porter Squares. Volunteer teams give away warm food and beverages, clothing and counsel to those in need. Streetlight volunteers also lead an outdoor worship service for the entire community.

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807
Computers, kitchen and rooms. Walk-ins welcome.
Women & children only (no boys over age 16).
Hours: Mon-Fri 10 a.m.– 8 p.m., Sat 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
On The Rise
341 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-497-7968
Women only. Home-base during the day and advocacy ser-
vices. Open six days / week. First-time visitors, call ahead
or stop by Mon-Sat, 8-2pm.

The Outdoor Church of Cambridge

The Outdoor Church of Cambridge is an outdoor ministry to homeless men and women in Cambridge. Prayer services and pastoral assistance outdoors in all seasons and all weather. Short prayer services in Porter Square, under the mobile sculpture near the T station, at 9:00 AM and on the Cambridge Common, near the tall Civil War monument and directly across from Christ Church Cambridge on Garden Street, at 1:00 PM every Sunday, throughout the year. Sandwiches, pastry, juice and clean white socks available in Harvard Square and Central Square. (978)456-00047, 39 Brown Road, Harvard, Massachusetts 01451
jedmannis@charter.net; www.theoutdoorchurch.net.

Victory Programs, Inc.
www.vpi.org. Short and long-term residential substance use
disorder treatment programs for individuals and families;
affordable housing opportunities for eligible individuals;
HIV / AIDS case management. Sites throughout Boston
Please call for more information. (617) 541-0222 ext. 626

Legal Aid:
Lawyers Clearinghouse, 617-723-0885
Shelter Legal Services (Newton), 617-965-0449

The Homeless Eyecare Network of Boston (HEN-Boston) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to maintaining a constantly undated network of affordable and free eyecare services for the homeless. If you need an eye exam or glasses, please visit our website, www.hen-boston.org.

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Sports Five on Five

A. Name 5 major men’s sports leagues.

1

2

3

4

5

B. Name 5 pro baseball teams in California.

1

2

3

4

5

C. Name 5 WNBA teams.

1

2

3

4

5

D. Name 5 nicknames each of which are used by two pro teams of different sports.

1

2

3

4

5

E. Name 5 pro teams who have nicknames that begin with "Red."

1

2

3

4

5

Sudoku

		6	9			8		
1		3	8	5	2	9		4
9		1	2		4	5		7
		4				6		
2		7	6		5	3		1
8		9	3	7	6	1		2
		2			1	4		

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains every number from 1 to 9.

Face Right!

Point the triangle of 'Gregs' in a rightward direction by moving only three of them.



Word Play

Draw a letter in each box so the same words are seen both across and down.

X	M	A	S
M			
A			
S			

Solutions to last issue’s puzzles

Amazon.com
Clorox
Google
Harley-Davidson
Johnson & Johnson
Liz Claiborne
Microsoft
Netflix
New York Times
Oracle
Xerox
Yahoo

1. Chimney
2. Side Window
3. Front Door
4. Dormers
5. Front Path



- Acute é 7
- Angstrom ã 8
- Breve ä 1
- Caron š 6
- Cedilla ç 10
- Circumflex î 9
- Diaeresis ö 4
- Grave è 2
- Macron ū 5
- Tilde ñ 3
- Umlaut ö 4

3	9	1	2	6	5	8	4	7
2	7	6	8	3	4	9	5	1
4	5	8	7	9	1	6	2	3
1	8	5	9	2	3	4	7	6
7	3	9	4	8	6	5	1	2
6	4	2	1	5	7	3	8	9
9	1	7	3	4	8	2	6	5
5	2	4	6	1	9	7	3	8
8	6	3	5	7	2	1	9	4



The future is in your hands

Every day, 110 street papers like this one help homeless people worldwide to escape poverty. So far, thanks to millions of readers like you, 200,000 vendors in 40 countries have earned a living and changed their lives.

Learn more and get involved at www.street-papers.org/2010



International
Network of
Street
Papers



WE ARE VISIBLE

SIGN UP SPEAK OUT BE SEEN
HELPING YOU CONNECT TO THE SOCIAL WORLD

@Project5050 says:

So often, elements of development work to silence the minorities in our communities. Be it poverty, oppression, circumstance, or decision, I want to know... It's time to pull the tape off the mouths of those who truly understand struggle in America, and hand them the microphone of social media.

@gregstaffa says:

I believe social media is a good tool for someone who is homeless because in many ways it gives them a voice. I can Twitter about a product that I did not like and often a company rep will write back. Unless you put it on there places like Twitter and Facebook don't care who you are. I've made friends on facebook and Twitter based on my own writings or tweets and months would go by before they realized I was homeless.

WWW.WEAREVISIBLE.COM

TWITTER: **@WEAREVISIBLE** FACEBOOK: **FACEBOOK.COM/WEAREVISIBLE**

ALSO FOLLOW:

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@lostawareness

@alleycat22469
@beckyblanton

@padschicago
@TCManWalking

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Cambridge, MA 02138

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